

Ten Tips for Special Educators

Collaborate to promote the participation of students with disabilities in the inclusive classroom.



Visit the inclusive classroom.

Assess student progress and participation in the classroom setting. Your lesson modifications, accommodations, and learning goals will be more meaningful.



Define roles and expectations.

Tell classroom teachers your role, and explain how you can help. Specify what you will need to increase student participation. Discuss discipline and behavior expectations.



Use the expertise of others.

Solicit the classroom teacher's participation. Ask for the syllabus, learning objectives, outcome standards, rubrics and any specific content information.

Develop a rapport with teammates.



Talk with classroom teachers in person! Encourage others to voice concerns, hopes and fears. Even a two minute chat between classes can establish collaboration.

Watch your language!



Avoid acronyms or language specific to your field. Good collaboration stems from good communication. Use people-first language.

Invite students to IEP meetings.



Students who attend their own meetings, understand their role and responsibility as active learners. Ask peers, family, friends, and teachers to share their goals and expectations with the student.



Friends are natural supports.

Peers can walk together between classes, record messages on communication devices or assist at lunch.



Bolster student-teacher relationships.

Brag about your student's strengths! Tell the classroom teacher how your student participates. Never apologize for placing a student in an inclusive classroom or promise that a student will "not be a bother."

Supervise Paraeducators.



Give paraeducators explicit instructions. Outline duties in detail. Always follow up and monitor how things are going in the classroom!

Promote active, experiential learning!



Assist in planning cooperative learning groups, centers, partner learning, and project-based lessons. Alternative methods encourage active learning for ALL students.